

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 1686

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CE

SUBJ: COMMENTS ON PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE'S VIEWS

RE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

REF: COLOMBO 1685

1. IN REFTEL I HAVE REPORTED PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE'S BELIEF THAT COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING WAS SUCCESSFUL IN SEEKING TO BRIDGE GAP BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, HER CONTINUED CONCERN OVER ALGERIAN STEAM-ROLLER TACTICS WITHIN NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, AND HER HOPE SHE CAN EXERCISE EFFECTIVE CONTROL AND MODERATION WHEN SRI LANKA HOSTS NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN COLOMBO NEXT YEAR. TO UNDERSCORE THE OBVIOUS, THERE IS GIANT STEP BETWEEN MRS BANDRANAIKE'S GOOD INTENTIONS, AS EXPRESSED TO ME, AND HER ABILITY TO TRANSLATE THEM INTO EFFECTIVE ACTION. MODERATE CONSENSUS SHE OBSERVED WITHIN COMMONWEALTH FRAMEWORK WILL PROBABLY DISAPPEAR RAPIDLY WHEN COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS ARE CONFRONTED WITH EXHORTATIONS FROM MILITANTS TO ADOPT MORE RADICAL FORMULATIONS IN NAME OF NON-ALIGNED SOLIDARITY.

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2. PRIME MINISTER FACES UP-HILL BATTLE ON SEVERAL FRONTS. ON INTERNATIONAL FRONT, SRI LANKA HAD LIMITED RESOURCES AND INFLUENCE, SMALL NUMBER OF OVERSEAS MISSIONS, AND LITTLE CONCRETE SUPPORT TO DATE FROM LIKE-MINDED MODERATES. DESPITE RHETORIC HERE ABOUT "ASIAN IDENTITY", BANDARANAIKE GOVERNMENT UNABLE TO COUNT ON ANY COHESIVE ELEMENT WITHIN ASIAN REGION, TO EXTENT ISRAEL PROVIDES THIS INGREDIENT TO ARABS AND WHITE PROVIDE IT TO BLACKS IN PARTS OF AFRICA. CONSEQUENTLY, GSL WILL FIND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND, IN FACT, RISKY TO TRY TO DEVELOP COUNTER-FORCE TO ALGERIANS AND OTHER MILITANTS, SOME OF WHOM ALREADY QUESTION ADVISABILITY OF HOLDING NEXT SUMMIT IN COLOMBO. ON DOMESTIC FRONT, ONCE PM BEGINS TO DEVELOP SRI LANKA'S SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS ON NON-ALIGNED RESOLUTIONS, SHE WILL HAVE TO ACCOMMODATE VIEWS OF PARTNERS IN HER COALITION GOVT WHO REPRESENT TROTSKYITES AND MOSCOW COMMUNISTS AND WHOSE VIEWS ARE CONSIDERABLY LEFT OF HER OWN.

3. DESPITE THESE HANDICAPS, MRS BANDARANAIKE, IS WELL-KNOWN AND WELL-REGARDED WITHIN NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, HAVING ATTENDED ALL FOUR PREVIOUS SUMMIT MEETINGS. AT SAME TIME SHE IS WILLING TO LISTEN TO ADVICE FROM THOSE OUTSIDE NON-ALIGNED RANKS. I THEREFORE BELIEVE WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO EXERT SOME INFLUENCE ON EVENTS, AT LEAST ON MARGIN, AND, WITH BENEFIT OF CONTINUED HELPFUL GUIDANCE FROM DEPT, I PLAN TO PURSUE DIALOGUE WITH PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER GSL MEMBERS IN MONTHS AHEAD.
VAN HOLLEN

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